However, the availability of natural gas in future would serve as a catalyst to reinvigorate industrial activity in that area.

Closure of paper mills in various States

4500. SHRI SURENDRA LATH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of paper mills closed down in various States during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for the closure of these paper mills;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to revive these paper mills;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO) : (a) The data regarding the number of paper mills closed down in the country is not centrally maintained. However, during the period from 1.1.2000 to 31.3.2003, cases of 76 sick pulp and paper mills were registered with the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), a quasi-judicial body, under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985. State-wise number of sick paper mills is at Statement (*See* below).

(b) Major reasons of sickness as reported by the sick companies at the time of their registration include change in Government policies, managerial/ production/technical/marketing/financial problems and lack of adequate infrastructure, delay in sanction and disbursement of Term Loan by Financial Institutions/ Banks, and high interest cost.

(c) to (e) Under the existing policy on industrial sickness, the BIFR deals with the problem of sick industrial companies. Revival of sick industrial units is also undertaken by amalgamation/merger of sick units with healthy units and this is encouraged by granting income-tax concession, etc. to healthy units, which undertake such amalgamation. The Reserve Bank of India has also issued guidelines to banks and financial institutions for strengthening the monitoring systems and arresting industrial sickness at the incipient stage. No proposal is under consideration in the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion for revival of sick paper mills.

Statement

State-wise number of Sick Paper Mills during 1-1-2000 to 31-3-2003

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of Sick Paper Mills
1.	Andhra Pradesh	3
2.	Bihar	1
3.	Chhattisgarh	1
4.	Gujarat	11
5.	Kerala	2
6.	Karnataka	2
7.	Madhya Pradesh	1
8.	Maharashtra	17
9.	NCT Delhi	12
10.	Punjab	9
11.	Tamil Nadu	6
12.	Uttar Pradesh	9
13.	West Bengal	2
	TOTAL	76

Impact of New Exim policy on exports

†4501. SHRI ABHAY KANT PRASAD : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the impact of new Exim Policy on our exports;

(b) the total value of exports made since 1 April, 2003 in various fields;

(c) whether any increase has been registered in the exports to the countries which have adopted common currency;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to improve the status of export of the country?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.